

REMARKS

As an initial matter, Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 18 to 30 are allowed.

As regards the objection to the Specification, the Office Action contends that "PCT and related application data" must be provided "at the beginning of the [S]pecification under 'RELATED APPLICATIONS.'" Applicants respectfully disagree. The present application was submitted under 35 U.S.C. § 371 as the national stage of PCT International Application No. PCT/DE01/02147. As such, there is no requirement that the PCT application be cross-referenced in the Specification. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is directed to M.P.E.P. § 1893.03(c), which states:

[A] national stage application submitted under 35 U.S.C. 371 may not claim benefit of the filing date of the international application of which it is the national stage since its filing date is the date of filing of that international application. . . . Stated differently, since the international application is not an earlier application (it has the same filing date as the national stage), a benefit claim under 35 U.S.C. 120 in the national stage to the international application is inappropriate. . . . Accordingly, it is not necessary for the applicant to amend the first sentence of the specification to reference the international application number that was used to identify the application during international processing of the application by the international authorities prior to commencement of the national stage.

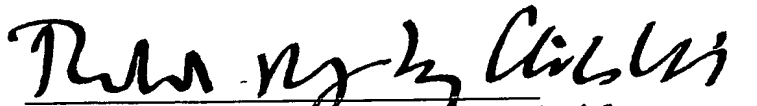
In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for immediate allowance. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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